

Report created by Erin Brown, Shorebird Counter and Public Educator for the Shorebird Conservation and Education Project with the Saint John Naturalists Club.

Friday, September 1, 2023

Public Engagement

- There were 18 people on the beach during the shift and 10 were approached. Most were interested to hear about the birds and all interactions were positive. Most others were too distant to be approached.
- 4 leashed dogs were observed on the beach.

Counts

Flats

- An estimate of “peeps” feeding across the mud flats was 1700.
- Other birds included: 40 Black Bellied Plovers, 210 Gulls, 3 Black Ducks, 16 Cormorants, 1 Great Egret, 15 Great Blue Herons, 17 Common Eiders, 2 Whimbrels, 2 Peregrine Falcons, 1 Harrier, and 1 Merlin.
- 1 Bonapart’s Gull was seen separate from the main group of gulls.

Marsh – With the high tide, the marsh was mostly flooded.

- 190 “peeps” flew over the marsh. Quite a few were seen in the gravel area of the marsh with 2 Sanderlings among them.
- Other birds included 126 Black/Mallard Ducks, 5 Great Egrets, 24 Gulls, 8 Great Blue Herons, 1 Greater Yellowlegs, 3 Lesser Yellowlegs, and 3 Crows.

East Beach – With the very high tide, the path to this area was too dangerous and the area was skipped.

Main Beach

- The number of “peeps” was estimated to be 1200. The narrow beach made it difficult not to disturb the birds.
- Other birds seen included 2 Peregrines who made a few attempts to catch “peeps,” nearly succeeding once.
- One Herring Gull was seen repeatedly flying into the middle of the flocks of “peeps” and disturbing them.

Pocket Beaches

- A- No shorebirds seen.

B- No shorebirds seen.

C- No shorebirds seen. 1 Bald Eagle flew over the beach. 16 Surf Scoters rested on offshore.

D- No shorebirds seen. 1 Common Eider fed just offshore.

D/E – 1 Semipalmated Sandpiper and 1 Spotted Sandpiper were on the rocks near the beach. 2 “peeps” flew in to land on the beach but they changed their minds.

E- No shorebirds seen.

Inaccessible Beaches – No shorebirds seen. Beach very narrow due to tide.

Other Observations

- Checked some beaches with nearby marshes that had been reported to me as possible habitat.
 - o Emerson Creek – No shorebirds seen. Beach is clearly used by locals but not likely much disturbance to birds that may go there.
 - o Reeds Brook – 16 Semipalmated Plovers were roosting on the cobble.
 - o Gardner Creek – No shorebirds seen but Semipalmated Plovers were heard.
 - o Tynemouth Creek – 5 Semipalmated Plovers were seen along with a group of “peeps” that flew off the mud flats as I drove past. The main beach in this area is only accessible through private land unless you walk quite a way so there is likely little disturbance of any birds roosting there.

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